38.   A computer-implemented method of automatically evaluating a new financial account applicant for a financial institution, the new financial applicant having no existing financial account with the financial institution, the method comprising the acts of:

accessing a computer network to retrieve credit bureau data for the new financial applicant, the credit bureau data being stored in a credit bureau database;

accessing the computer network to retrieve account information for the new financial applicant, the account information being stored in an account information database; and
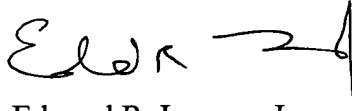
determining with a computer whether to open the financial account for the new financial applicant based on the credit bureau data and the account information.

REMARKS

Claims 1-9 and 17-32 are pending. Claims 22 and 23 are amended to correct a minor typographical error. Claims 10-16 were canceled in a prior Preliminary Amendment. New Claims 33-38 are added.

Entry of the present Preliminary Amendment and allowance of the application are respectfully requested. The undersigned is available for telephone consultation during normal business hours.

Respectfully submitted,

Edward R. Lawson Jr.
Reg. No. 41,931

Docket No. 025213-9023-01
Michael Best & Friedrich LLP
100 East Wisconsin Avenue
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53202-4108
(414) 271-6560

-6-

APPENDIX

MARKED-UP AMENDED SPECIFICATION

On page 6, the paragraph substituted for the deleted second full paragraph:

--

The scoring model module 44 includes software that takes either some or all of the data acquired by the application server 22 and the modules 26, 30, 34, 38 and 42 connected thereto and provides a score or scores for each applicant based on an algorithm that defines a risk model. Preferably, the algorithm is a logistic regression algorithm that generates a score for each applicant which score predicts the likelihood that the applicant will be an account abuser. While various risk models or algorithms might be appropriate for use with the network 10, the algorithm of the preferred embodiment generates a score ranging between 900 (indicating that there is little risk to the financial institution) and 100 (indicating that there is a high risk to the financial institution). The risk model focuses on past and present account abuse. Specifically, those applicants whose scores are in approximately the lowest twenty (20) percent of the score range (i.e., approximately between 100 and 260) tend to have more unpaid NSF items on file with major retailers, have multiple financial account applications requested, have had at least one account closed for cause, have a less established or non-existent credit history, have one or more repossessed or charged-off trade lines, have one or more open trade lines that are thirty (30) to eighty (80) days delinquent, and/or have had more derogatory items than average over the past three years. The score or scores are returned to the application server for processing and comparison with the financial institutions' policy rules and guidelines.

--

On page 26, the paragraph substituted for the deleted third full paragraph:

--

Figure 2 is a flowchart illustrating the decisioning process 100 of the network 10 shown in Figure 1. The information acquired by the application server 22 is compared 104 against the policy rules (or exclusions) 108 and financial account application evaluation guidelines (or reviews) 112. If the data indicates (by comparison at 116) that the applicant does not comply with one of the policy rules, then a fail code is issued 120 to the financial institution indicating that the applicant should be denied the account and the process is terminated 122. If the rules are met then the application server 22 issues a pass code 124. At

the same time that the policy rules are being evaluated against the data, the application server 22 is comparing 128 the data with the financial account application evaluation guidelines. If the data does not meet the guidelines, then a code is issued 132 to the financial institution indicating that the application should be reviewed in greater detail. If the data meets the guidelines, then a pass code is issued 136, and (provided the pass code is issued for the policy rules evaluation) the application server 22 proceeds 138 to evaluate the credit bureau data against the credit policy exclusions 140 and credit review guidelines 144 provided by the financial institution. If the applicant's data from the credit bureau indicates (by comparison at 148) a violation of the financial institution credit policy exclusions, then the application server 22 issues a code 152 to the financial institution indicating that the application should be declined and the process is terminated. Alternatively, if the credit policy exclusions are not violated by the credit bureau data, then the application server 22 continues 156 with the data evaluation process. At the same time that the credit policy exclusions are being compared with the credit bureau data, the application server 22 is comparing 160 the credit review guidelines with the credit bureau data. If both the credit policy exclusions and credit review guidelines are satisfied by the credit bureau data, then the application server 22 proceeds 164 with the evaluation process. If the data does not [meed] meet the credit review guidelines, then a code is issued 168 to the financial institution indicating that the application should be reviewed in greater detail. However, even if the credit review guidelines are not satisfied, the financial institution may opt to continue 172 with the evaluation process. Alternatively, the process is terminated 122. If both the credit policy exclusions and credit review guidelines are satisfied, the application server 22 executes the scoring model (or risk model algorithm) 176 to generate the score or scores for the applicant. The score or scores is/are compared 180 against financial institution past/fail criteria. If the applicant fails, then the application server 22 issues 184 a decline code to the financial institution again indicating that the applicant should be declined and the process is terminated 122. Alternatively, if the applicant's score passes the financial institution criteria, the score is reviewed 188 to determine whether the applicant failed any policy reviews. If so, then the application server 22 issues 192 to the financial institution a code indicating that the application should be reviewed in greater detail and the process is terminated 122. If the consumer did not fail to satisfy any credit review guideline, then the application server 22 generates a code 196 indicating that the financial institution should accept the application and offer the product applied for (such as a demand deposit account (DDA)) to the applicant. Additionally, the application server 22 determines 200 whether the financial institution is offering cross-selling

-8-

products and, if so, which products 204. If not, the process terminates 122. However, if the financial institution is offering cross-selling products, the applicant data and score or scores are compared 208 with the financial institution pass/fail criteria for such products. If the data and score or scores do not meet the criteria, then the application server 22 issues a fail code 212 to the financial institution indicating that no cross-selling products are to be offered to the applicant and the process terminates 122. Alternatively, if the applicant passes the criteria, the application server 22 issues a code 216 to the financial institution indicating that the product should be offered to the applicant and that the financial institution should invite the applicant to apply for that product. The process then terminates 122.

--

APPENDIX
MARKED-UP AMENDED CLAIMS

22.   (Amended) A system as set forth in claim 17 wherein the system further comprises a customer setup data module including electronic guidelines for the financial institution, wherein the system server generates a score for the applicant based on the [debit] credit bureau data and the financial account information and compares the guidelines against the score to evaluate whether to accept the application.

23.   (Amended) A system as set forth in claim 17 wherein the system further comprises a customer setup data module including electronic guidelines for the financial institution, wherein the system server generates a score for the applicant based on the [debit] credit bureau data and the account information and compares the guidelines against the score to evaluate whether to offer additional products and services of the financial institution to the applicant.